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 RUEHDM/AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS 0828
 RUEHLD/AMEMBASSY LONDON 6915
 RUEHMO/AMEMBASSY MOSCOW 0606
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E.O. 12065: N/A
 TAGS: PEPR, LY, IT
 SUBJECT: INTERVIEW WITH QADHAFI

1. SUMMARY. THE LEFT OF CENTER ROME DAILY "LA REPUBBLICA" CARRIES A FRONT PAGE INTERVIEW WITH COLONEL QADHAFI IN ITS JULY 14 EDITION. HIGHLIGHTS OF THE INTERVIEW INCLUDE QADHAFI'S DENIAL THAT HE SUPPORTS INTERNATIONAL TERRORISM, HIS SEVERITY TOWARD NEARLY ALL ARAB GOVERNMENTS IN PLACE, AND HIS WARNING TO THE UNITED STATES CONCERNING FURTHER MANEUVERS IN THE GULF OF SIDRA. QADHAFI EXPRESSES HIS WILLINGNESS TO ACCEPT ISRAEL AS SOON AS A DEMOCRATIC STATE RECOGNIZING PALESTINIAN RIGHTS EXISTS IN PALESTINE. HE BLASTS THE U.S. FOR SABOTAGING HIS PROPOSED VISIT TO ITALY AND ADMITS THE U.S. EMBARGO IS HURTING HIM ECONOMICALLY. IN "LA REPUBBLICA'S" VIEW, QADHAFI HAS TEMPERED SOMEWHAT HIS LANGUAGE TOWARD THE WEST. WE QUESTION THIS JUDGMENT. THE PAPER FURTHER EXPRESSES ITS OPPOSITION TO AN EMBARGO THAT WOULD TURN LIBYA INTO A SUPER-POWER BATTLEGROUND. FOLLOWING IS A PRECIS OF KEY POINTS. END SUMMARY.

2. LIBYAN-ITALIAN RELATIONS

AS CONCERNS A POSSIBLE VISIT ON MY PART TO ITALY, THE UNITED STATES WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR SABOTAGING IT. IN FACT, "AMERICA FORMALLY ASKED ITALY NOT TO RECEIVE ME. WE HAVE BEEN OFFICIALLY INFORMED OF THIS." (NOTE: IN RESPONSE TO THE JOURNALIST'S DIRECT QUESTION WHETHER ITALY HAD INFORMED LIBYA

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OF THE PURPORTED U.S. REQUEST, QADHAFI REPLIED THAT HE HAD BEEN INFORMED "BY THE COMPETENT OFFICIAL ORGANS.") FURTHERMORE, THE U.S. EMBARGO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE DIFFICULTIES WE HAVE IN REPAYING OUR ECONOMIC DEBTS TO ITALY.

3. TERRORISM

I HAVE NEVER SUPPORTED TERRORIST ORGANIZATIONS, BUT I DON'T DENY MY SUPPORT FOR REVOLUTIONARY MOVEMENTS. THE WEST IS BEST ADVISED TO IMPOSE ITS ECONOMIC AND MILITARY EMBARGOS AGAINST ISRAEL, "THE EVIL OF THE EARTH."

4. ARAB GOVERNMENTS

THERE IS NO TRUE REVOLUTIONARY FORCE IN THE ARAB WORLD AT THIS TIME EXCEPT LIBYA, SOUTH YEMEN, POLISARIO, THE PROGRESSIVE LEBANESE AND THE PALESTINIAN LEFT. ALL THE OTHERS ARE REACTIONARY, HOSTILE TO LIBERTY AND THE RIGHTS OF MEN.

5. LIBYAN-SOVIET RELATIONS

THE SOVIETS HAVE BEEN LITTLE HELP TO LEBANON IN ITS HOUR OF NEED. CONFRONTED BY DIRECT ATTACK BY THE UNITED STATES AGAINST LIBYA, HOWEVER, THE SOVIET UNION WOULD NOT STAND IDLE. SOVIET ADVISERS ARE IN LIBYA, BUT FOR THAT MATTER SO ARE AMERICAN CIVILIANS, WHO ARE IN FACT MORE NUMEROUS THAN THE SOVIETS.

6. U.S.-LIBYAN RELATIONS

NEITHER LIBYA NOR THE U.S. OCCUPY ANY PART OF ONE ANOTHER'S TERRITORY. THEREFORE, THERE IS NO REASON WHY WE CAN'T OPEN A DIALOGUE. THERE IS A STANDING WILLINGNESS ON MY PART TO MEET PRESIDENT REAGAN AND NEGOTIATE WITH THE U.S. NONETHELESS, ANY NAVAL MANEUVERS IN THE GULF OF SIDRA WOULD RESULT IN WAR. LIBYA WILL DEFEND ITS TERRITORY.

7. LIBYAN-ISRAELI RELATIONS

SHOULD A TRULY DEMOCRATIC STATE COME INTO EXISTENCE IN PALESTINE, ONE IN WHICH JEWS AND PALESTINIANS LIVE TOGETHER, I WOULD BE PLEASED TO RECOGNIZE SUCH A STATE.

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8. COMMENT

"LA REPUBBLICA" EDITORIALIZES THAT THE TONE OF QADHAFI'S REMARKS IS SOMEWHAT MORE TEMPERED THAN IT HAS BEEN IN THE PAST, EXCEPT AS REGARDS ISRAEL. THE PAPER FURTHER EXPRESSES ITS OPPOSITION TO AN EMBARGO THAT WOULD TURN LIBYA INTO A FIGHTING GROUND BETWEEN THE TWO SUPERPOWERS. HOWEVER, WE FAIL TO DISCERN IN THE INTERVIEW ANY MODERATION IN QADHAFI'S TONE WHEN COMPARED TO PAST INTERVIEWS THAT PERIODICALLY APPEAR IN THE ITALIAN PRESS.

RABB
END OF MESSAGE

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